

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 13, 2001

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**NEWS RELEASE**

**Businesses Preparing for the Next Big One  
During California Earthquake Preparedness Month**

SACRAMENTO -- Helping California businesses avoid the staggering losses that have plagued many of them during past earthquakes is the focus of the third week (April 15 – 21) of the California Earthquake Preparedness Month campaign.

According to the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, the coordinating agency for the statewide campaign, after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, 400 businesses were destroyed and more than 3,500 other were damaged. Additionally, after the Northridge earthquake in 1994, more than 89,000 businesses requested financial assistance from the Federal Government.

"Businesses owners aren't the only ones to feel the pain following a major quake," said OES Director Dallas Jones. "Employees suffer too. State and federal agencies provided almost \$2 million in Disaster Unemployment Assistance after Loma Prieta, and more than \$7 million after Northridge."

The OES Director urged California businesses to take time this month and beyond to evaluate how vulnerable they are to damage following a major temblor and reduce the potential impacts of earthquakes and other disasters.

Jones suggested that businesses could reduce the potential effects of earthquakes and other disasters by taking simple, cost-effective, and proactive measures prior to an earthquake.

***Recent California Quake Activity***

**Between April 5 (1007 hrs.) and April 12 (1007 hrs.), California experienced more than 160 earthquakes. Of those, eight were greater than magnitude 3.0.** View a map of recent quakes at <http://quake.wr.usgs.gov/recenteqs/latest.htm>

3.5 4/12 (6 mi.) E of Watsonville

3.0 4/11 (9 mi.) ENE of Olancho

3.1 4/09 (14 mi.) SSW of Ludlow

3.1 4/09 (15 mi.) E of Coso Junction

3.0 04/09 (7 mi.) S of Tres Pinos

3.2 04/07 (2 mi.) S of San Juan Bautista

3.6 04/07 (7 mi.) ESE of Coso Junction

3.0 04/07 (25 mi.) WNW of Punta Gorda

He recommended that businesses develop emergency plans to address major threats, review and test new or existing plans, backup computer data, conduct first aid and CPR training for members of in-house emergency response teams or sponsor educational activities to increase the home and workplace preparedness levels of employees.

“Reducing hazards in the workplace can also greatly reduce the risk of injuries following an earthquake,” said Jones. “Repositioning furniture in offices and securing bookcases, file cabinets, computers and other nonstructural items can greatly reduce injuries to employees and customers without a substantial investment of money.”

Additional mitigation steps recommended by Jones include retrofitting unreinforced masonry and other vulnerable buildings, securing tall industrial storage racks and hazardous material containers, and using restraints to prevent fragile inventories from falling off shelves.

“Some of these measures are more complex and expensive than others, but each of them will help small businesses and large corporations alike improve their chances of continuing to function after a damaging earthquake or another emergency.”

Jones suggested that businesses of all sizes start by developing plans to resume operations after an emergency.

“The time and energy a company puts into preparing for disasters and addressing recovery issues can make the difference between surviving and failing,” Jones said.

Additional earthquake preparedness information is available at <http://www.oes.ca.gov>.

**Ceremonies at Lotta’s Fountain commemorating the 95th anniversary of the San Francisco earthquake at 5:13 a.m. on April 18 and two other events in the San Francisco Bay Area later in the day highlight local campaign activities this week. At 9 a.m., members of the San Francisco Fire Department and personnel at General Hospital will participate in the hospital’s earthquake exercise. At 1 p.m., the City of Albany will conduct a partial activation of its Emergency Operations Center. Details about local California Earthquake Month Campaign events are available at the OES Web Site at <http://www.oes.ca.gov>.**

## **April 15-21 Campaign Events**

Apr. 18	1906 Earthquake Commemoration	Lotta’s Fountain	5:13 a.m.
Apr. 18	SFFD and General Hospital EQ Exercise	S.F. General Hospital	9 a.m.-noon
Apr. 18	City of Albany Partial EOC Activation	Albany Community Center	1-4 p.m.
Apr. 21	SFFD Citywide NERT Exercise	Marina Middle School	9 a.m.-noon
Apr. 21	Santa Clarita Emergency Expo	Saugus Speedway	10 a.m.-3 p.m.

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